



Call for Paper

The Department of Business Economics, Health & Social Care of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, HEIRS and SSPH+

jointly organize the conference

Economics, Health and Happiness

Lugano
January 14, 15, 16th 2016

The issue

Individual well-being is under pressure nowadays as people are becoming increasingly exposed to many sources of stress. Changes in socio-demographic (i.e. population aging) and epidemiological trends (with the increase in chronic diseases), and changes in labor force participation patterns (especially for women), affect family and inter-personal relationships. In addition to this, the retrenchment of the welfare state and the

recent economic recession have contributed to reducing the resources available to families and individuals. The existing literature on health and happiness has generally shown the complexity of the etiological model underlying both trends. As well as ordinary economic goods, social and relational factors are also crucial in determining an individual's well-being. Genetic predisposition and genetically shaped features (such as personality traits) may also account for indivi-

dual differences in health and happiness. Several individual and contextual factors affect both happiness and health, and it would be interesting to examine the similarities/differences in the relationships between these determinants and health/happiness. The conference aims to stimulate and expand research on the determinants of health and happiness, and to foster the comprehension of how the effects of these determinants are heterogeneous across social groups.



Photo Lugano view: Bruno Belandini



The topics

Relevant topics for submitting papers are the following:

1. The causality relationship between health and happiness

Studies concerning the determinants of subjective well-being, conducted in several countries and based on different datasets and methods, have all shown that health is one of the strongest predictors of individual happiness. However, happiness and positive emotion-related attitudes also appear to have some effect on health and longevity. Causality seems to run in both directions. Issues of measurement, inverse causality and unobserved heterogeneity should be tackled.

2. Health and happiness in hardship

In times of economic crisis, a crucial question is whether and how the current economic downturn can affect individual health and happiness. Past findings are mixed, and suggest that an economic crisis may generate both threats and opportunities for individual health/happiness.

3. Interpersonal relationships and health/happiness

Interpersonal relationships are important determinants of individual health and happiness, although their positive effects cannot be taken for granted. A relationship can provide an individual with emotional and practical support, but it may be also a source of stress and conflicts. A special case is that of caregiving.

4. Disability, health shocks and happiness

According to a number of studies, individuals are able to adapt to disability to some extent, preserving their level of subjective well-being, although the human ability to adapt may depend on the kind/degree of disability/health shock. In some cases, or for some people, adaptation may not occur.

5. Lifestyle, health and happiness

Individual lifestyle is known to be significantly linked to mental and physical health status. Physical activity, diet (and IMC), smoking and alcohol consumption can all impact on a person's physical and mental well-being.

6. Social inequalities and their impact on health and happiness

Overall, the relationship between individual socio-economic-status (SES) and individual well-being is well-established. However, the social gradient may vary depending on the context

considered, and on the way in which SES is effectively measured (in terms of income, education, occupational status, social prestige). Other factors can also structure individual well-being (gender, ethnicity, etc.)

7. The workplace, health and individual well-being

An individual's occupation may exert an autonomous effect on health and happiness via both material and psychosocial pathways. Recent labor market reforms and the economic crisis have both contributed to altering occupational conditions (in terms of working hours, type of contract, perceived insecurity, effort/reward balance, etc.). The well-being consequences of these changes have not yet been fully understood.

8. Happiness, health and genes

Although there is nothing deterministic in the relationship between genes and health/happiness, today it is known that genes cannot be overlooked when studying these phenomena. Several studies have found that up to 50% of inter-individual variations in subjective well-being can be accounted for by genetic differences. Genes may act on individual levels of happiness and health by shaping personality traits like neuroticism, extraversion, the propensity for risk-taking, etc.

Keynote Speakers



Andrew Clark
Paris School of Economics, France



Carlo Francescutti
Azienda per i Servizi Sanitari, Friuli, Italy



Giampiero Griffo
Member of World Council of Disabled Peoples' International



Martin Knapp
London School of Economics, UK



Jennifer Nedelsky
University of Toronto, Canada



Nicole Probst-Hensch
Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, Switzerland



Carol Ryff
Institute of Aging, University of Wisconsin, USA



Robert Sugden
University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK



Christopher Whelan
School of Sociology, University College Dublin, Ireland

Paper deadlines

- Proposals, from 100 to 300 words, must be sent by July 15th, 2015 to the following email address:
ehh2016@supsi.ch
- Acceptance: September 15th, 2015
- Final paper: November 2nd, 2015

Registration fee (food and beverage included)

Seniors: 400.- CHF
Juniors: 150.- CHF

Registration until November 2nd, 2015 on the website
www.supsi.ch/go/ehh2016

Conference venue

Campus SUPSI Trevano, Lugano (Switzerland)

Website and contact

www.supsi.ch/go/ehh2016
ehh2016@supsi.ch

Scientific Committee

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